

REMARKS

The Office Action mailed May 23, 2006 has been carefully considered. Claims 1 and 5 have been amended, claims 4 and 12 have been cancelled and new claim 17 has been added. The application now contains Claims 1-17. While a new claim was added, the total number of claims is still less than 21 and the total number of independent claims is less than 4, so no fee is due for the claims.

Applicant hereby petitions for a three-month extension of time under 37 CFR 1.136. The fee for such petition is enclosed.

In the Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 1, 3, 8, 10, 11 and 13 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Singer (U.S. Patent No. 1,486,695) and rejected claims 2 and 9 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Singer. Claims 4-7, 12 and 14-16 were objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but the Examiner indicated they would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. With respect to claim 16, inasmuch as such claim is an independent claim, applicant assumes the Examiner meant that such claim was allowable.

Applicant has amended the claims so as to specifically claim the subject matter deemed allowable by the Examiner if rewritten. Specifically, claim 1 has been amended to include the limitation of claim 4, and claim 4 has therefore been cancelled. New claim 17 is actually a new independent claim including the previously presented claim 1 and the previously presented claim 12.

Given the Examiner's comments relative to claims 4-7, 12, 14-16 and applicant's amendment to claim 1, applicant submits that amended claim 1 patentably distinguishes over the

references cited by the Examiner taken alone or in combination. Applicant further submits that dependent claims 2-3, 5-11 and 13-15 distinguish over the references of record for the same reason as claim 1 (amended), and are therefore also in condition for immediate allowance. Claim 16 is presumed to have been allowed by the Examiner. New claim 17 is an independent claim that includes the limitations of previously presented claims 1 and 12, and applicant submits that such claim is now in condition for immediate allowance for the same reasons as claim 1 (amended).

In light of the amendments and remarks, applicant respectfully submits that this application is now in condition for allowance, and an early Notice of Allowance is hereby respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'James G. Coplit', written over a horizontal line.

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